



Traditional Machismo, *Caballerismo* and Self-efficacy among University Students in Nicaragua

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INTRODUCTION

Machismo is rooted in the history and culture of the Latin American region. There has long been a discourse in Latin America that prescribes gender roles, meaning men should be dominant while women be submissive and self-sacrificing (Valencia-Garcia, et al., 2008). Additionally, Machismo is often related to negative male characteristics, such as hypermasculinity, aggressiveness, violence, and sexism. However, since 1980s, scholars have redefined this conception by adding new elements into it; thus machismo can also be understood as the belief that men are to be providers and it is their duty to keep families safe (Comas-Díaz, 1995).

In order to deeply understand the concept of machismo, researchers divided machismo into different dimensions and then developed scales for measurement. The commonly used machismo scales are 28 items Macho Scale concentrating on the sex-role stereotyping and authoritarianism (Villemez & Touhey, 1977); 60 items Masculine-Feminine Personality Traits Scale consisting of four types of factors: Assertive Masculinity, Affective Femininity, Aggressive Masculinity, and Submissive Femininity (Laracantu, 1989); 13 items Machismo Scale including negative machismo, positive male honor and egalitarianism (Neff, 2001).

This study adopted the growing trend in psychology and sociology of using a negative and positive assessment of machismo: the 20 items Traditional Machismo and *Caballerismo* Scale developed by Arciniega and Anderson (2008).

Research Objective:

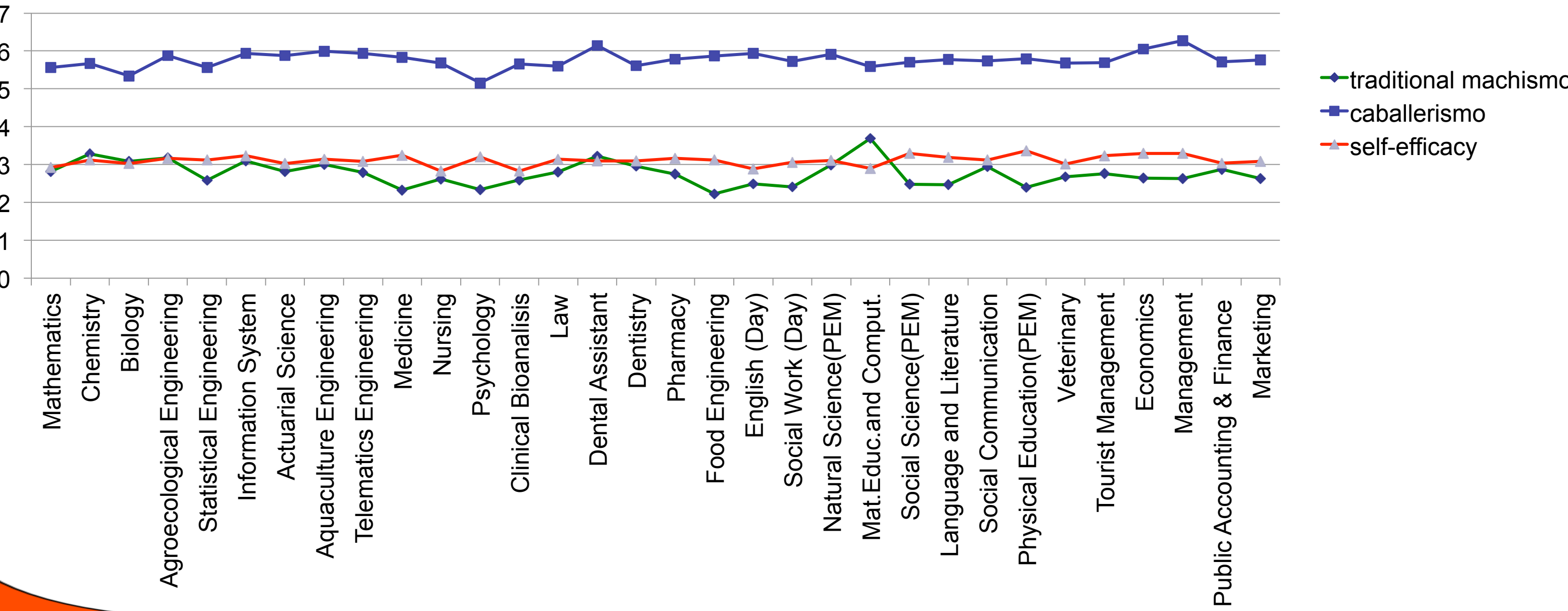
- This study seeks to
- 1) assess gender differences across colleges concerning the endorsement of traditional machismo, *caballerismo* (chivalry) and general self-efficacy among university students in Nicaragua, and
 - 2) understand the relationship between machismo and self-efficacy in this population.

Data and Procedures

Sample. A random, stratified and proportional by school and gender sampling of university students from Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Nicaragua Leon (UNAN-Leon) was employed (N = 965). UNAN-Leon is a public university with a population of 14,157 students. The survey instrument was translated from English into Spanish by a team of bilingual researchers in the United States and pilot tested in Nicaragua. Data were collected in December of 2012. The OSU Institutional Review Board approved all study procedures.

Procedures. T-test was used to assess gender differences in the adoption of machismo, *caballerismo*, and self-efficacy. Linear regression (OLS) was employed to explore the association between the endorsement of traditional machismo and *caballerismo* (chivalry) and self-efficacy.

Descriptive Statistics. The sample consisted of 409 (42.4%) male students and 556 (57.6%) female students ($M = 19.7$; $SD = 1.7$). Eighty percent of the students came from urban areas while 20% came from rural areas. The average monthly family income of the sample was \$417.7 ($SD = 400$).



METHODS

Measures

Traditional Machismo and *Caballerismo* Scale (Arciniega & Anderson, 2008)

Traditional Machismo Subscale (1-7)

1. In a family a father's wish is law.
2. Men are superior to women.
3. The birth of a male child is more important than a female child.
4. It is important not to be the weakest man in a group.
5. Real men never let down their guard.
6. It would be shameful for a man to cry in front of his children.
7. A man should be in control of his wife.
8. It is necessary to fight when challenged.
9. It is important for women to be beautiful.
10. The bills (electric, phone, etc.) should be in the man's name.

Caballerismo Subscale (1-7)

1. Men want their children to have better lives than themselves.
2. A real man does not brag about sex.
3. Men should respect their elders.
4. Men hold their mothers in high regard.
5. The family is more important than the individual.
6. Men should be willing to fight to defend their family.
7. Men must exhibit fairness in all situations.
8. A woman is expected to be loyal to her husband.
9. Men must display good manners in public.
10. Men should be affectionate with their children.

General Self-efficacy Scale (1-4) (Schwarzer, 1995)

1. I manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
2. If someone opposes me, I can find means and ways to get what I want.
3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
4. I am confident that I can deal efficiently with unexpected events.
5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.
7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.
8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.
9. If I am in a bind, I can usually think of something to do.
10. No matter what comes my way, I'm usually able to handle it.

RESULTS

Traditional Machismo (α = .77)						Caballerismo (α = .78)					Self-efficacy (α = .87)				
	N	% Male	Mean		T-test(p)	N	% Male	Mean		T-test(p)	N	% Male	Mean		T-test(p)
College			male	female				male	female				male	female	
Technology & Sciences	194	62.37	3.28	2.59	.00003***	196	61.22	5.92	5.65	.057†	196	61.73	3.14	3.09	.455
Medicine	164	35.98	2.70	2.22	.00126**	164	35.98	5.97	5.55	.014*	164	36.59	3.20	3.11	.524
Law	82	46.34	3.27	2.40	.00001***	80	45.00	5.58	5.62	.883	81	45.68	3.19	3.12	.513
Odontology	44	36.36	3.86	2.48	.00001***	45	35.56	5.62	5.68	.879	45	35.56	3.28	3.00	.604
Chemistry	119	28.57	3.22	2.30	.00006***	120	29.17	6.01	5.73	.147	121	28.93	3.11	3.16	.237
Education	114	35.96	3.13	2.42	.00041***	113	34.51	5.84	5.76	.618	118	34.75	3.18	3.03	.745
Veterinary	36	55.56	2.95	2.33	.06957†	37	56.76	5.71	5.65	.871	37	56.76	3.00	3.04	.578
Economics	161	36.02	3.13	2.47	.00001***	161	36.02	5.97	5.90	.665	165	35.76	3.26	3.15	.496
Total	914	42.34	3.15	2.39	.00000***	918	41.94	5.88	5.71	.011*	927	42.07	3.17	3.10	.645

† $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

T-test showed the difference between male and female students regarding the endorsement of traditional machismo. In general, male students had .76 higher score than that of female students, and this difference is prominently significant across all colleges. The greatest difference between male and female students was in the college of Odontology while the slightest was in the college of Medicine. T-test also showed the difference between male students and female students regarding the endorsement of *caballerismo*. In general, male students had .17 higher score than that of female students. However, this difference is not statistically significant among most colleges, except for the colleges of Technology & Science and Medicine. Finally, T-test suggested that there was no significant difference between males and females concerning self-efficacy.

Moreover, OLS suggested that there was no statistically significant association between the endorsement of traditional machismo and self-efficacy ($b = -.02$, $\beta = -.04$, $p > .05$). However, this picture changed after taking into consideration the gender factor. For female students, this negative relationship became statistically significant ($b = -.07$, $\beta = -.12$, $p < .01$) while for male students, this negative association remained not statistically significant ($b = -.01$, $\beta = -.18$, $p > .05$). Meanwhile, there was a positive and statistically significant association between the endorsement of *caballerismo* and self-efficacy for both male and female students. For the overall population, $b = .14$, $\beta = .26$, $p < .001$. As for male students, $b = .19$, $\beta = .35$, $p < .001$; for female students, $b = .09$, $\beta = .18$, $p < .001$.

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

Understanding cultural patterns is an important component of social work intervention and research. This study illuminates a complex aspect of the Latin American culture, analyzing gender differences among university students regarding the endorsement of machismo. More importantly, this study suggests the negative relationship between traditional machismo and self-efficacy for female university students. Meanwhile, the endorsement of *caballerismo* has a positive association with self-efficacy for both male and female university students.

The distinctions between males and females regarding the endorsement of traditional machismo and *caballerismo*, as well as the association between machismo and self-efficacy, have important implications for social interventions in Nicaragua. Given that the sample drawn for this study consists of some of the most educated individuals in Nicaragua and, given that their responses appear to reflect the beliefs of the society as a whole, the results from this study can be useful to inform interventions seeking to increase the empowerment of women and encourage reflection about gender expectations in the Central American region and the Latino culture.